

Steering Committee Meeting State Scenic and Recreational Highway Plan

February 16, 2010, 1:00 – 5:00 PM

WSDOT's Service Level C Wing Conference Room

310 Maple Park Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98504

Conference Call/Go-To-Meeting: 360-709-8060 access code 1073030

Meeting Summary

Attendance

Steering Committee Members in Attendance:

Sande Balch, Strait of Juan de Fuca Highway/Local Byway Representative

Dianne Croal, National Park Service

Jim Eychaner, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office

Anne Fritzel, Department of Commerce

Greg Griffith, State Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Maree Lerchen, White Pass Scenic Byway/Local Byway Representative

Bonnie Lippitt, US Forest Service

Annette Nesse, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe/Tribal Transportation Planning Organization

Randy Person, Washington State Parks

Paula Reeves, WSDOT Highways and Local Programs

Rosemary Siipola, Cowlitz Wahkiakum Council of Governments/MPO/RTPO Coordinating Committee

Steering Committee Members Absent:

Cascade Bicycle Club/Local Byway Group Representative

Association of Washington Cities

King County

FHWA

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Washington State Transportation Commission

Other Interested Parties Attending in Person or via phone/web:

Charlotte, Claybrooke, WSDOT Highways and Local Programs

Megan Cotton, WSDOT Tribal Liaison

Introduction

Paula Reeves, WSDOT, called the meeting to order, thanked the attendees for traveling to the meeting, asked for public comment, and asked for feedback on the meeting summary from the December 8th Steering Committee Meeting. She introduced WSDOT Staff present and welcomed everyone to WSDOT Headquarters.

The Steering Committee reviewed and approved the December 8th Meeting Summary without change.

The WSDOT staff gave a background presentation on Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways Plan Update including a recap of the requirements, timeline, content of the state statutes, and discussion of purpose. Paula Reeves, WSDOT, led a group discussion of the primary elements of Scenic and Recreational Highways including: traveler services; tourism; stewardship, planning and integration. The Steering Committee discussed the goal statements for Scenic and Recreational Highways as they relate to the State Transportation Policy Goals on the Environment, Safety and Mobility. They discussed the pending legislation that would amend the State Transportation Policy Goals to include Economic Vitality, but the change would not take effect until 90 days after the bill is signed into law, if signed into law, making it too late for this Plan update to address.

The Steering Committee spent the balance of the meeting discussing the comments WSDOT received so far on the Draft Plan and performance measures for the Scenic and Recreational Highways associated with each of the five State Transportation Policy Goals. Presentation materials are available on the Plan Update website:

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/LocalPrograms/ScenicByways/BywaysPlan.htm>

Steering Committee Discussion

Following the presentation, meeting attendees spent the majority of the meeting discussing the comments WSDOT received as of February 10th, 2010 on the Draft Plan and performance measures for the Scenic and Recreational Highways associated with each of the five State Transportation Policy Goals. The following is a summary of key points during the discussion.

- The Resource Planning Index produced by University of Washington should include the most scenic locations as defined by historic WSDOT studies.
- The Resource Planning Index should include most at-risk areas or valuable resource areas at-risk of development.
- The Safety Goal should be re-considered or clarified. How is signage a part of safety or traveler services? Bicycle and pedestrian safety must be considered along with motorist safety and should also be part of the Mobility Goal.
- Regarding the Environmental Goal, develop limits of acceptable change commonly used by State Parks and other agencies in evaluating change.
- More emphasis should be placed on access to recreational resources. This is included in connection with the State Transportation Policy Goal on Mobility.
- A clear vision statement should be included in the opening discussion within the Plan. The Plan needs a clear vision statement (suggested language provided).
- While the list of public comments shows transparency of the process, the Committee would like to see a summary of public comments to make it easier to understand them.
- In general the performance measures need to be aligned with the implementation steps.
- The Committee requested that the document be revised based on feedback at this meeting and send out again for review.
- Historic Markers, Heritage Markers, signs on the highways for historic properties could all have more consistency and consistency of process to establish or install them. There is inconsistency across the state.
- WSDOT should implement the plan through additional commitment of technical assistance in developing corridor plans and using tools to preserve and protect resources associated with the Scenic and Recreational Highways.
- Recreation and Conservation Office would like a copy of the Resource Planning Index data.
- The Committee would like to see tourism and traveler services projects split apart in the data and graphs related to past project funding.

Public Comment Period

Maree Larchen provided the following comments:

We see that you (WSDOT) have posted a position. Our expectations of a Scenic Byway Coordinator include:
Ability to coordinate with other state and federal agencies,
Networking with the National Scenic Byway groups,
Understands how the program [National Scenic Byway discretionary grant program] works.

We need someone with a marketing mentality; someone who knows how to help us with Power point presentations by integrating graphics and text to develop our grant proposals. We need someone to help advise us on our grant applications.

Sandy Balch provided the following comments:

As we said during the January conference call, the byway groups need someone to promote the system, help make signage consistent, maintain a strong relationship with the State Department of Tourism and other groups. We really need regional training sessions and networking meetings for the byway groups. Some of this could be done through newsletters and conference calls, but we need face to face networking. Watchable Wildlife Conferences are important.

We would like WSDOT to host a conference call to discuss the National Scenic Byway grant process before the end of February.

Closing Comments

Paula Reeves committed to send the Steering Committee five items in the next few weeks to review before the close of the comment period including:

- A summary of the comments received to date,
- Inclusion of most scenic locations based on studies WSDOT conducted between 1960 and 1990,
- A revision of pages 15-17 of the current draft to reflect Steering Committee comments,
- Inclusion of a vision statement up front in the revised draft, and
- Revision of pie chart showing program funding trends and different sources (splitting tourism from traveler services).

After close of the comment period the Draft will be revised based on feedback. WSDOT will then begin formatting the document and hopes to publish a final version in April.